

### REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

New claims 11-12 have been added.

This amendment adds, changes and/or deletes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1, 2, 4-6, and 8-12 are now pending in this application.

#### **Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102**

Claims 1-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Pub. No. 2001/0011810 (hereafter "Saiguchi et al."). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites an occupant protection system that includes a seat pan arranged below a seat cushion, an inflatable airbag arranged above the seat pan for pushing the seat cushion from below, and a gas generator for inflating the airbag in an emergency; wherein the gas generator is separate and exterior to the airbag, and is connected to the airbag via a pipe, wherein the airbag and the gas generator are mounted to the seat pan, wherein the gas generator is arranged along the upper surface of the seat pan. Claim 5 includes similar language.

Claim 4 recites an occupant protection system that includes a seat pan arranged below a seat cushion, an inflatable airbag arranged above the seat pan for pushing the seat cushion from below, and a gas generator for inflating the airbag in an emergency, wherein the gas generator is separate and exterior to the airbag, and is connected to the airbag via a pipe; wherein the airbag and the gas generator are mounted to the seat pan, wherein the gas

generator is arranged along the lower surface of the seat pan. Claim 9 includes similar language.

Saiguichi et al. discloses a seat that includes an airbag 320 that is arranged above a base plate 42 and an inflator 38C, 380 that is connected to the airbag 320 through an anchor 42d or side panel 420. See Saiguichi et al. at paragraphs 0172 and 0217-0218. As shown in Figures 23, 27, and 34, Saiguichi et al. discloses that the inflator 38C, 380 is arranged to the side of the base plate 42. Because the inflator 38C, 380 is arranged to the side of the base plate 42, Saiguichi et al. does not disclose that the inflator is “arranged along the upper surface of the seat pan” or “arranged along the lower surface of the seat pan.”

The Office states on page 3 of the Office Action that “‘upper’ or ‘lower’ surface would depend upon the frame of reference, which has not been specified.” Applicants note that the disclosure of the application provides a frame of reference and meaning for an upper surface and a lower surface. For example, Applicants’ disclosure provides meaning and a frame of reference for an upper surface and a lower surface in paragraph 0032 of the specification, as well as in Figures 1-4. In light of the frame of reference and the meaning provided by the Applicants’ disclosure, one of ordinary skill in the art would understand that Saiguichi et al. does not disclose all of the features recited by claims 1, 4, 5, and 9.

Applicants further note that Saiguichi et al. is related to JP 2001-247010, which is discussed in paragraph 0004 of the specification. As noted in paragraph 0004, this arrangement requires multiple operations to mount the system to a seat, thus complicating mounting of the system to the seat. By mounting the airbag and gas generator to a seat pan, Applicants’ invention facilitates mounting of an occupant protection system to a seat, as discussed in paragraph 0006 of the specification. Furthermore, arranging the gas generator along the upper surface of the seat pan can facilitate the connection between the gas generator and the airbag, whereas arrangement of the gas generator along the lower surface of the seat pan can increase the flexibility of the gas generator arrangement, as discussed in paragraph 0008 of the specification.

For at least the reasons set forth above, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check or credit card payment form being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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